

Scriptural Researches

ON THE LICITNESS

OF THE

SLAVE-TRADE,

SHEWING ITS CONFORMITY

WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF

NATURAL AND REVEALED RELIGION,

DELINEATED IN THE

SACRED WRITINGS OF THE WORD OF GOD.

BY THE REV. R. HARRIS.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES, FOR IN THEM YE THINK YE HAVE

ETERNAL LIFE. JOHN C. 5. V. 39.

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L O N D O N:

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T O

The WORSHIPFUL the MAYOR,  
RECORDER, ALDERMEN, BAILIFFS,  
And other MEMBERS of the COMMON COUNCIL  
Of the ancient and loyal BOROUGH and  
CORPORATION of LIVERPOOL,  
The following SCRIFTURAL RESEARCHES  
On the licitness of the SLAVE-TRADE,  
Are most respectfully inscribed

B Y

Their most obedient  
And most humble Servant,  
RAYMUND HARRIS.

## P R E F A C E.

UNWILLING to incur the displeasure of every friend to justice, religion, and humanity, I hasten to inform the Reader, who has cast an eye on the Title-page, that, in attempting to establish the licitneſs of the SLAVE-TRADE, nothing is farther removed from my thoughts, than to set up as an advocate for injustice and oppression: I am as much at enmity with both, as the most sanguine advocate for African Liberty may be. I am well apprized, that acts of violence and oppression, however authorized by numbers, however firmly established by long use, and a kind of traditional inattention to the sufferings of persons in an abject condition of life, can never change the criminality of their nature. Whatever is essentially incompatible with the sacred and inalienable rights of justice and humanity, can claim no place in the catalogue of virtues, even of the lowest rank; it must be for ever branded with every mark of infamy and guilt.

FAR then from attempting the least encroachment on the rights of Virtue, my sole drift in the present Tract is to examine with the utmost impartiality, the intrinsic nature of the SLAVE-TRADE: that is, whether the Trade itself, prescinding from every other incidental circumstance, which may have rendered the practice of it hateful, or even criminal, be in its own nature licit or illicit.

Now, it being evident in the first place, that the intrinsic morality or immorality, licitneſs or illicitneſs of all human pursuits is essentially inherent to the pursuits

pursuits themselves, and not at all depending on our habits or ideas of *Right* and *Wrong*, which are but too often influenced and darkened by prejudice, interest, and other passions; and, it being equally evident on the other hand, that the declarations of the Written Word of God are so many incontrovertible decisions, by which we are to judge of the intrinsic licitnes or illicitness of such facts as are registered in the Sacred Volumes; it follows necessarily, that, one of those facts being undoubtedly the SLAVE-TRADE, no arguments can be so forcible and conclusive, towards evincing the inherent lawfulness of it, as those Oracular decisions of the Word of God, which give a positive sanction to the Trade itself.—It is then by enforcing these unerring decisions only, the surest guide to direct our judgements in forming a just estimate of the merits of the present Controversy, that I mean to vindicate the licitnes of the SLAVE-TRADE; not by patronizing such crying enormities and abuses, as are said to be perpetrated in this most ancient commercial pursuit.

SHOULD the sanction of divine authority appear evident in favour of the SLAVE-TRADE, from the testimonies I shall produce in the series of my Researches, I shall consider myself perfectly disengaged from the most distant obligation of answering such objections, as are not grounded on the same divine authority: an authority of that irresistible weight of conviction, that every person, who has any pretensions to Religion, must immediately assent to, however plausible or ingenious the opposite arguments may appear, when viewed through the scanty light of mere human reason and sense.

THE scope of the following Researches being evidently to try the merits of the present Controversy by the Sacred Canons of the Written Word of

God, I can expect conviction only from such persons, as are not so far destitute of every sentiment of religion and good sense, as to disbelieve the divine authenticity of those Sacred Writings, in which the Finger of God has left in indelible characters the visible impression of his Wisdom.

Now, as these Sacred Records contain transactions relative to the SLAVE-TRADE, as practised in all the three religious Dispensations that have appeared in the World since the formation of the first of men to the present time, I shall, accordingly, divide my Scriptural Researches on that Trade, into three separate Parts: in which I shall successively prove, that the SLAVE-TRADE is perfectly consonant to the principles of the Law of Nature, the Mosaic Dispensation, and the Christian Law, as delineated to us in the Sacred Writings of the Word of God.

I HAVE prefixed to the whole a few positions or *Data*, which, I trust, will be found unquestionably true, and exactly conformable to sound reason; in order, that I may not be interrupted in the sequel with unnecessary repetitions of general principles, nor be in the least constrained to enter into a formal confutation of arguments, which do not immediately affect my subject, and that the Reader may see at one view the very fundamental principles of those inferences, which I draw in vindication of the SLAVE-TRADE from the Scriptural passages I have selected in the course of my Researches, out of a greater number of the same import I could easily produce.

THE Scriptural passages are literally transcribed from the Protestant Vulgar Translation of the Bible; which, being the most generally received in these Kingdoms, will, of course, have a greater weight of authority than any other with the major part of my Readers.

Readers. The Edition I use is that which was published in London by John Bill and Christopher Barker in the year 1669.

With respect to composition, I can pretend to neither elegance nor style: a Foreigner, unacquainted with the least element of the English Language till the twenty seventh year of his age, can have no claim to either: if he can but arrange his periods with a tolerable degree of grammatical accuracy, and express himself with sufficient clearness, method, and perspicuity, he has reason to expect every indulgence from the native candour of an English Critic.

D A T A.

## D A T A.

### I.

THAT the Volume of the Sacred Writings, commonly called the HOLY BIBLE, comprehending both the Old and the New Testaments, contains the unerring Decisions of the Word of God.

### II.

THAT these Decisions are of equal authority in both the Testaments, and that that Authority is the essential veracity of God, who is TRUTH itself.

### III.

THAT, as there can be no prescription against the authority of God, whatever is declared in any part of the Scriptural Records to be intrinsically good or bad, licit or illicit, must be essentially so in its own nature, however contrary any such declaration may be to the received opinions of men for any length of time.

### IV.

THAT, as the Supreme Legislator of the World is infinitely just and wise in all his decisions respecting *Right* and *Wrong*, and is no ways accountable to his creatures for the reasons of his conduct in the government of the World; so it must be a degree of presumption highly criminal in any creature to refuse assent to those Decisions, only because he cannot comprehend the hidden principles of that impartial justice which characterizes every decision of God.

### V.

THAT no person can be supposed to acknowledge in fact, that the Holy Scriptures are the infallible

Word of God, unless he acquiesces without reserve in every scriptural Decision, however incomprehensible the reasons and motives of those Decisions may be to him.

## VI.

THAT every person, who professes to acknowledge the Holy Scriptures to be the unerring Word of God, must consequently assent to every Scriptural Decision without reserve, only because he believes them to be the declarations of God; who, being TRUTH itself, can neither err himself, nor lead any one into error.

## VII.

THAT if one or more Decisions of the Written Word of God give a positive sanction to the intrinsic licitness of any human pursuit (for instance, the SLAVE-TRADE), whoever professes to believe the incontrovertible veracity of the Written Word of God, essentially incompatible with the least degree of injustice, must consequently believe the pursuit itself to be intrinsically just and lawful in the strictest sense of the word.

## VIII.

THAT no advantages whatever attending the prosecution of an unlawful pursuit, nor any abuses whatever committed in the prosecution of a lawful one, can so far affect the pursuits themselves, as to render the latter intrinsically criminal, or the former essentially just.

## IX.

THAT, as no private or national advantages whatever can alter the inherent turpitude of a pursuit essentially unlawful; so no arguments whatever, built solely on the strength of those advantages, will ever justify the SLAVE TRADE, till the same be proved essentially just and lawful in its nature.

## X.

THAT, as no abuses or malepractices whatever, committed in the prosecution of a lawful pursuit, can ever alter the intrinsic licitness of it; so no arguments whatever, built solely on the strength of those abuses, will ever evince the intrinsic deformity of the SLAVE-TRADE, any more than that of any other lawful pursuit, where abuses are committed, unless the same be proved essentially unjust and illicit.

## XI.

THAT, if abuses and malepractices, committed in the prosecution of a lawful pursuit, can be checked and prevented by Legal Authority, the private and national advantages arising from that pursuit, and the inconveniences attending the suppression of it, joined to its intrinsic licitness, ought to have a very powerful influence towards not abolishing the prosecution of that pursuit.

## XII.

THAT, if abuses and malepractices, though evidently subject to the control of the Legislature, are to be considered as sufficient arguments to suppress the SLAVE-TRADE, without any regard to its intrinsic licitness, every other branch of Trade, in which abuses are committed, ought, on the same account, to share the same fate.

## SECTION I.

*Scriptural Researches on the licitness of the Slave-Trade, shewing its conformity with the principles of the Law of Nature delineated in the Sacred Writings.*

I. THAT period of years, which elapsed from the day on which *God created Man in his own image* (a), to the day, on which He gave his Laws to the Children of Israel on Mount Sinai (b), is generally called the period of the Law of Nature. The exact duration of this period is a matter of controversy among the Learned. Archbishop Usher, whose chronological accuracy in the computation of scriptural years is much admired, reckons 2513 years between the Creation of the World and the promulgation of the Mosaic Law. But be this as it may (for no difference in computation can affect the subject of my present Researches), it is evident from the tenour of the Sacred Records, that, between the creation of Adam and the promulgation of the Mosaic Law, the Dispensation of the Law of Nature, commonly called Natural Religion, or the Religion of Nature, was the only true Religion in the World.

II. SIMPLE as the principles of this Religion may appear, directed chiefly to worship One, Supreme, Eternal, Being, the Creator and Governor of all things, and to chuse an act in exact conformity to the inward dictates of sound and unbiassed reason in every transaction of life, where *Right* and *Wrong* were left to choice of Man; it would be exceedingly difficult, as well as perfectly extraneous to my present subject, to digest those principles into a regular Code of those particular

(a) *Genesis, c. 1. v. 27.*

(b) *Exodus, c. 29, &c.*

particular laws and duties, which constituted the whole system of that Religion.—I have not engaged to display the whole frame and structure of Natural Religion: I am to shew no farther, than that the principles and laws of that Religion, as far as we find them delineated in the Sacred Writings, not only never forbade the SLAVE-TRADE, or hinted the most distant opposition to the prosecution of it; but that, the same being frequently exemplified in the constant and uninterrupted practice of some of the most faithful observers of the laws and principles of that Religion, under the visible protection of God, whose favourites they were, the laws and principles themselves were in perfect harmony with the practice of the SLAVE-TRADE.—Two very singular instances of this kind, verified in the conduct of two of the most distinguished Characters within the above period of the Law of Nature, ABRAHAM and JOSEPH, will, I flatter myself, be sufficient, without mentioning others, to justify my assertion, and set the present Controversy in the clearest light of Scriptural conviction.

### A B R A H A M.

III. IN every place of Scripture, where mention is made of this Venerable Patriarch, he is uniformly represented as a perfect pattern of every virtue. The strongest faith in God (*c*), the firmest reliance on his promises (*d*), and the readiest and most unreserved obedience to his commands (*e*); the most sympathizing humanity to every fellow-creature (*f*), the strictest justice and integrity in all his dealings with men (*g*), and the utmost disinterestedness of heart (*h*); infine, the

(*c*) Gen. 13. 6. Rom. 4. 3. Galat. 3. 6. James, 2. 23. (*d*) Ibid.

(*e*) Gen. 22. v. 1—13. (*f*) Gen. 18. 23, &c.

(*g*) Gen. 21. 22, &c., Gen. 23. 7, &c. (*h*) Gen. 14. 22, 23.

the greatest love of peace and harmony (*i*), together with every other religious, domestic, and social virtue (*k*), are the distinguishing characteristics of his person.

IV. OWING, no doubt, to these exalted virtues, he is frequently represented in Scripture in familiar intercourse with God (*l*) ; who, in innumerable places of Holy Writ, styles himself emphatically *The God of Abraham*, as the most acceptable person he had on earth : he calls him *His Friend* (*m*), and makes the most exalted panegyric of his virtues, when, appearing to his son Isaac after the death of his Father, he speaks to him in the following remarkable and comprehensive words : *In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws* (*n*).

V. NOR is his unimpeachable character, as a righteous man, less conspicuous in the Writings of the New Testament ; where, among many other testimonies of his irreproachable life, the Son of God himself, who always speaks of him as one of the most faithful servants of his Eternal Father, rebukes the Jews for having so far departed from the rectitude of Abraham's conduct, as not to be entitled to the appellation of his Children ; for, *If ye were Abraham's children*, says he, *ye would do the works of Abraham* (*o*).

VI. Now, it is very remarkable, that among the works of Abraham, the very faithful, obedient, humane, just, disinterested, righteous, and virtuous Abraham, who constantly obeyed the voice of God, kept his charge, his commandments, his statutes, and his laws,

(*i*) Gen. 21. 22, &c. Gen. 13. 7, &c. (*k*) Gen. 18. 59.

(*l*) Gen. 12. 1, &c. Gen. 15. 1, &c. Gen. 17. 1, &c. Gen. 18. 1, &c.

(*m*) Isaiah, 41. 8. (*n*) Gen. 26. 4, 5. (*o*) John, 8. 39.

laws, and found such acceptance with him, as to be admitted to the familiarity of his friendly intercourse; it is very remarkable, I say, that there should be found among his *works* the practice of dealing in human flesh, the practice of purchasing with money those of his own species, and making them *Bond-Slaves* (*p*), without the least intimation being ever given by any of the inspired Writers, that his conduct in this particular, where the natural rights of justice and humanity are said to be so essentially interested, was ever reprobated, or even discountenanced in the most distant manner by any private or public intimation of God's displeasure!

VII. AND what can we reasonably conclude from this uniform silence of the inspired Writers? but that the practice of purchasing slaves was never accounted in the sight of God a violation of any of the laws of the Religion of Nature. For, is it credible, or, rather is it possible for any one to believe, consistently with the ideas we ought to entertain of the infinite holiness of God, in whom dwelleth essentially the fulness of justice, that he would style himself *The God of Abraham*, in preference to any other; that he would vouchsafe to honour him with the appellation of *His Friend*; that he would bless in his seed all the nations of the earth (*q*); that he would declare he had obeyed his voice, kept his charge, his commandments, his statutes, and his laws, without excepting any one; or that Jesus Christ would have ever commended his works without any restriction whatever, if the SLAVE-TRADE, so publickly and so constantly practised by Abraham, had been an iniquitous, unnatural pursuit, essentially opposite to the sacred laws of Nature, to the natural rights of justice and humanity?

### VIII. THE

VIII. THE force of this powerful inference, considered even as a mere negative argument in favour of the intrinsic licitness of the **SLAVE-TRADE**, carries such an irresistible weight of conviction, that it amounts, in my opinion, to a positive approbation of it: it being otherwise impossible to reconcile the justice of God with his own scriptural decisions concerning the essential impartiality, and eternal unchangeableness of its nature.

IX. THAT this positive approbation, this sanction of Divine Authority in favour of the **SLAVE-TRADE**, so visible in the conduct of God, eye-witness to every transaction of Abraham's life, is not a bare conjecture, or a mere negative inference of a passionate advocate for slavery, but the real intent and meaning of the Written Word of God, will appear evident to the most zealous advocate for African Liberty, who, divesting himself for a moment of every prejudice, that the love of humanity may have created in his mind, will dispassionately examine with me the striking circumstances of the following Case. It is that of a **BOND-SLAVE** in the service of Abraham; which, as related in the Sacred Writings, contains such interesting particulars, that, I flatter myself, it will evince to demonstration, that the **SLAVE-TRADE** has the indisputable sanction of Divine Authority, even when attended with circumstances not of the most pleasing complexion to the eyes of humanity.

X. THIS very decisive fact is thus literally related in the <sup>xxi<sup>th</sup> Chapter of the Book of **GENESIS**.</sup>

1. Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an hand-maid, an Egyptian, whose name was **Hagar**,
2. And Sarai said unto Abram: Behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid: it may be, that I may obtain

obtain children by her: and Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.

3. And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife.
4. And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes.
5. And Sarai said unto Abram: my wrong be upon thee: I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the Lord judge between me and thee.
6. But Abram said unto Sarai: behold, thy maid is in thy hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face.
7. And the Angel found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur.
8. And he said: Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence comest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said: I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai.
9. And the Angel of the Lord said unto her: return unto thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands.
10. And the Angel of the Lord said unto her: I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude.
11. And the Angel of the Lord said unto her: behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the Lord hath heard thy affliction.

XI. Enough have we for the present to observe on this portion of Hagar's history, without proceeding to relate the treatment she received in her Master's house some time after her return.--Here we have a

Hand-maid, called soon after a *Bond-woman* by God himself (r); born in Africa, for she was an Egyptian by birth, and, consequently, an *African Slave*; labouring under every natural disadvantage attending the condition of a Bond-slave; bought by a stranger, transported from her native Country into a distant land, the Land of Canaan, where Abram dwelt; that is, transported from Africa into Asia: separated for ever from her dearest relations, friends, and acquaintance, and obliged to wait at hand, and work for the advantage of her Masters.

XII. THE sterility of her Mistress seemed rather to flatter Hagar with the prospect of meliorating her condition, by becoming her Master's wife at the solicitation of her Mistress: but the event proved the contrary, and disappointed all her hopes; for not only she did not obtain her freedom by becoming his wife, but finding she was with child by her Master, and being, on this account, not quite so respectful to her Mistress, as the latter expected in quality of Abram's principal wife, she was so roughly handled by Sarai, with the permission of Abram, that, unable to bear her treatment, she fled from her house, left her service, and took refuge in the desert. What the correction was, that Sarai inflicted on Hagar, is not particularly specified in the Sacred History: the Hebrew word used upon the occasion, and rendered by the Translators *dealt hardly*, has such an extent of signification, as may easily convey the idea of a very cruel and oppressive treatment, which, in the actual state of Hagar's pregnancy, must have rendered her affliction much more intolerable and oppressive.

XIII. EVERY circumstance attending the wretched situation of this poor African Slave, who, though legally

gally married to her Master, is kept still in bondage, and forced, as it were, out of his house and service in the condition she was in, through hard usage and severity, though charged with no other crime, but being not quite so respectful to her husband's first wife as she had been before her marriage, seems to excite compassion, and justify her escape.—Were Hagar's case that of any African female slave now in the West-Indies, and were the same to be tried before a jury composed of some of the present advocates for African Liberty in this Island, one might decide almost to a certainty in whose favour the verdict would be given : the Slave would most probably be declared free, and both Master and Mistress severely reprimanded, if not also condemned in a heavy pecuniary mulct : no other verdict would be consistent with the principles they so publickly avow.

XIV. BUT did Hagar obtain the same favourable sentence at the impartial Tribunal of God, when she pleaded her Cause before the Minister of his justice, whom he deputed to represent his Person ? Did he approve of her conduct in leaving her Master's house, and quitting his service ? Did he hint the most distant reflection on the proceedings of Abram or her Mistress Sarai ? Did he signify to her, that her quality of Abram's wife, or the severity of Sarai's treatment, even in her actual state of pregnancy, emancipated her from her bondage, rescinded the original contract of her purchase, or that that contract had been illicit and contrary to his laws, or that she might, on this account, consider herself as no part of Abram's lawful property, but at full liberty to dispose of her person as she thought best ?—NO :—on the contrary, her conduct was condemned by the Representative of God, who ordered her in his name *to return to her Mistress, and submit herself under her hands* ; though at the same

time he assured her, that *the Lord had heard her affliction.*

XV. WERE all other scriptural evidences wanted in favour of the SLAVE-TRADE, this Decree alone of the highest Court of Justice possible, this solemn Sentence of the Supreme Judge of *Right* and *Wrong*, *Who is no respecter of persons, but, in every nation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him* (s), and who, in the case before us, had an intuitive and comprehensive knowledge of every particular circumstance attending the claims of both the Parties, must convince every impartial Reader, that the licit-ness of that Trade is evidently warranted by the Written Word of God ; who, by the very act of deputing an Angel, on purpose to command the fugitive Slave to return to her Master's house, and submit herself under the hands of her Mistress, declared her to be her Master's indisputable property, and the original bargain or contract, by which he had acquired that property, to be just and lawful in its nature : that is, that the SLAVE-TRADE, even when attended with circumstances not altogether conformable to the feelings of humanity, is essentially consistent with the sacred and inalienable rights of justice, and has the positive sanction of God in its support ; however displeasing those circumstances may be to his fatherly Providence, as they appear to have been in the Case of Hagar ; who, in alleviation of her sufferings and affliction, was promised the honour of being the Mother of a numerous progeny, branched out afterwards into twelve powerful kingdoms (t).

### J O S E P H.

XVI. WHOEVER has the least acquaintance with the principal human Characters exhibited in the Sacred Records,

(s) Acts, c. 10. v. 34, 35. (t) Gen. c. 25. v. 16.

Records, must readily acknowledge, that the character of JOSEPH, great grand-son to Patriarch Abraham, is one of the most amiable, most upright, and instructive. He is there represented in every vicissitude of fortune, acquiring in every station by his wisdom and virtue favour with God and man (*u*). His virtue suffers no diminution whatever, but shines with greater lustre, in passing from the condition of a slave to that of Governor of all Egypt. His fidelity to God, and to his Master Potiphar, is assailed by strong temptations, which, in spite of youth and interest, he resists with the most exemplary fortitude (*w.*) Thrown into the horrors of a dungeon through the artifice of a false woman, whose honour he preserves at the expence of his own, his integrity and prudence soon render him conspicuous even in that dark recess (*x*). Favoured with the divine spirit of prophecy, and called in his Prophetic Character into the presence of Pharaoh, the wise and extensive plan he forms to save the Kingdom from the miseries of impending famine, raises him to that height, where his abilities and virtues are eminently displayed in the public service, and answer the purposes of the Providence of God in favour of his chosen People (*y*). Enabled by despotic power to retain his unnatural brethren in that Egyptian bondage, to which they had once consigned him, and gratify revenge by every accumulation of disgrace, he not only generously forgives them the outrageous treatment he had received, but he even effaces the very remembrance of those injuries which had produced his adversity;

(*u*) Gen. 39. 2—6. Ibid. 21—23. Ibid. c. 41. 37, &c.

(*w*) Gen. 39. 7—12. (*x*) Gen. 39. 21—23. Gen. 40. 1, &c.

(*y*) Gen. 40. 8—23. Ibid. c. 41. 1, &c. Ibid. c. 45. 4, &c.

versity; and, without recriminating his adversaries, without retaliating their injuries, he extenuates in some measure the guilt of a crime, which, by the interposition of Providence, had proved subservient to a happy issue (z).

XVII. EVERY feature of this most amiable Character is so perfectly finished, so exactly conformable to the model of the strictest virtue, that the whole Piece is one of the completest portraits of righteousness and humanity, that has ever been exhibited to the World in any stage of religion. Christianity itself can produce but few exemplars, that will contend with him for superiority; especially, when it is considered, that Joseph's innocence and virtue, from his youth to his decrepit old age, retained, in the very heart of infidelity itself, the same uniform lustre and firmness, though beset at different periods by such strong temptations to infidelity and vice, as are the inseparable attendants of extreme adversity and prosperity. In a word: every step of Joseph's conduct in every stage of his life met the approbation of God, and was especially directed by his protecting hand; for, in the language of the inspired Writer, *The Lord was with him: and that which he did, the Lord made it to prosper* (a).

XVIII. Now, if we examine the history of this eminent Personage, as described in the Sacred Records, we shall soon find a second very remarkable instance of the licitness of the SLAVE-TRADE, as practised, not only without control, but under the visible protection of God, by one of the strictest professors of the Religion of Nature, the laws and principles of which were the invariable rule of his conduct: a man in high favour with the Almighty, the framer of those very principles and laws; and who, in the inscrutable order

(z) Gen. c. 37. 23—28. Ibid. 45. 1—11. (a) Gen. 39. 23.

der of his fatherly Providence, chose him the instrument and promoter of his glory (*b*), imparted him the divine spirit of his wisdom (*c*), led him, as it were, by the hand, in every step of his life (*d*), and prospered whatever he undertook (*e*). An instance, attended with circumstances of that singular nature and tendency, as seems not only to fix the subject of the present Controversy in the best point of view, but to ascertain, beyond the power of reply, the inherent lawfulness of the **SLAVE-TRADE**.

XIX. THE fact, with all its attending circumstances, is thus described in the XLVII<sup>th</sup> Chapter of the Book of **GENESIS**.

13. And there was no bread in all the land ; for the famine was very sore : so that the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan fainted by reason of the famine.
14. And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, for the corn which they bought ; and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house.
15. And when the money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came unto Joseph, and said : give us bread ; for why should we die in thy presence ? for the money faileth.
16. And Joseph said : give your cattle ; and I will give you for your cattle, if money fail.
17. And they brought their cattle unto Joseph : and Joseph gave them bread in exchange for horses, and for the flocks, and for the cattle of the herds, and for the asses ; and he fed them with bread for all their cattle, for that year.

18. When

(*b*) Ps. 105. 16—24. (*c*) Gen. c. 40. 43. (*d*) Gen. 39. 21—23.

(*e*) Gen. 39. 23

18. When that year was ended, they came unto him the second year, and said unto him: we will not hide it from my Lord, how that our money is spent; my Lord also hath our herds of cattle; there is not aught left in the sight of my Lord, but our bodies and our lands.

19. Wherefore shall we die before thine eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh: and give us feed, that we may live and not die, that the land be not desolate.

20. And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh: for the Egyptians sold every man his field; because the famine prevailed over them: so the land became Pharaoh's.

21. And as for the people, he removed them to cities, from one end of the borders of Egypt, even unto the other end thereof.

22. Only the land of the Priests bought he not; for the Priests had a portion assigned them of Pharaoh, and did eat their portion which Pharaoh gave them; wherefore they sold not their lands.

23. Then Joseph said unto the people: behold, I have bought you this day, and your land, for Pharaoh: lo, here is feed for you, and ye shall sow the land.

24. And it shall come to pass in the encrease, that ye shall give the fifth part unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for them of your households, and for food for your little ones.

25. And they said: thou hast saved our lives: let us find grace in the sight of my Lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants.

26. And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth

part; except the land of the Priests only, which became not Pharaoh's.

XX. THE transactions related in this portion of Joseph's history, afford us a considerable number of very pertinent reflections on the SLAVE-TRADE: the following appear to me very remarkable.

1. Here is a whole Nation of free and independent Africans, one only description of men excepted, inhabiting the richest, the most populous, and the most civilized part of Africa, or, perhaps, of any other part of the Globe at that period, all made SLAVES in one day by a most explicit, deliberate, and formal contract.

2. Allowing, the Kingdom of Egypt at that time to have extended no farther than it does at present; that is, 600 miles from North to South, and 250 from East to West, it must have contained, on the most moderate computation, as many inhabitants, at least, as the Kingdom of Great Britain does at this present time; Egypt was then the Emporium of the whole world, where all arts and sciences, commerce, agriculture, and polity flourished in a degree of perfection and refinement, superior, perhaps, to that of any part of Europe in our days. Accordingly, the number of Africans purchased by Joseph in one day, at the very moderate price of one year's maintenance per head, including their land, amounted, at least, to seven or eight millions of persons: a number not unequal, perhaps, to all the purchases of the kind ever made by English Merchants since the commencement of the GUINEA-TRADE.

3. The happy condition of these Africans, prior to Joseph's purchase, is a circumstance worth observing: it differed in every respect from that of most of their present countrymen purchased by our European Merchants. The latter are generally Slaves, or Cap-

tives, in their native land ; the former were all free and independent subjects : those, when purchased by our African Merchants are in a state of absolute indigence and poverty ; whereas the latter were all people of property, and, indeed, of landed property ; for it is very particularly specified in the scriptural account, that *the Egyptians sold every man his field* ; that is, his landed estate.

4. The circumstance of transporting Slaves from their native soil into a distant Country, is also very obvious in the conduct of Joseph, subsequent to the purchase he had made ; for, *as for the people*, says the Scripture, *he removed them to cities, from one end of the borders of Egypt, even unto the other end thereof* : by which expedient he deprived them of every prospect of ever re-enjoying their respective paternal Estates, and the places of their nativity. And is it not more than probable, that, in the execution of so extensive a plan, as removing so many millions of inhabitants of every age, sex, condition, and rank, infants at the breast, young children, old and decrepit people, infirm and delicate, from one end of the borders of so extensive a Country as Egypt, even unto the other end thereof, many must have inevitably perished in passing through the scorching sands of a Country desolate with famine, and parched up, as it were, by an uninterrupted drought of six consecutive years, whatever wise regulations we may naturally suppose were made by Joseph to accommodate such an extraordinary number of Slaves ?

5. This numerous multitude of free and independent Africans, become now by contract menial Slaves to Pharaoh, are immediately sent by Joseph to cultivate their Master's Estates throughout all Egypt, for *the land became Pharaoh's* : so, that we may consider them with the utmost propriety, as so many Slaves,

transported from their native place, and sent by their Master, or his Steward or Overseer, to work in his different Plantations, merely for their keep; for all the land was the property of Pharaoh, and the portion of the yearly produce of it, which they were allowed, is said to have been given them only *for seed of the field, for their food, those of their households, and their little ones.*

6. The last and most interesting circumstance, in my opinion, attending this singular transaction, is the manner in which Joseph proceeded to effect his purchase. For, in consequence of that prophetic spirit, with which the Almighty had especially favoured him, and by which he foretold the wonderful fertility of the land for seven years to come, and the extreme sterility of it for as many years after, he engrossed all the corn that grew in Egypt during the first seven years of plenty, and laid it up against the time of impending famine (f). When this began to rage in the land, he opened his stores, and made the Egyptians pay ready money for their corn: being entirely drained of cash, for *Joseph gathered up all the money, that was found in the land of Egypt,* he refused to supply them with bread, unless they gave all their cattle in exchange; which, accordingly, they did, for such proportion of corn as would keep them one year: being now reduced to the last extremity, and entirely destitute of provisions, as well as of every means of procuring them, save their lands and persons, he availed himself of this favourable opportunity to effect a purchase, for which he had gradually paved the way: a bargain was accordingly concluded between him and Pharaoh's subjects, by which he bought all their lands and persons for as much corn, as would keep the latter

the space of one year; which, from the circumstance of giving them feed, wherewith to sow the land, appears to have been the last of that septennial dearth. So, that, even taking advantage of the extreme indigence of his fellow-creatures, when able to relieve them, in order to reduce them to the condition of Slaves, was not deemed by this righteous, and inspired Man, *with whom the Lord was*, an infraction of those sacred laws of Nature, which were the invariable rule of his conduct.

XXI. How far Joseph's conduct in every stage of this remarkable transaction, so favourable to the SLAVE-TRADE, may appear equitable or otherwise to the present humane advocates for African Liberty, through the feeble light of mere human reason and sense, I know not: this however is most certain, that there is not so much as one Jot in the Sacred Writings of the Word of God, that seems to disapprove in the most distant manner any one part of his conduct, either in this or in any other transaction of his long and holy life (g). On the contrary, in every place of Scripture, where this eminent Personage is introduced, whether before or after this transaction, he is constantly represented as one of the most faithful and acceptable servants of God, under whose particular protection he lived and thrived (h); by whose immediate direction he acted (i); and who did nothing whatever, but the Almighty *made it to prosper* (k). The very transaction, we are speaking of, when rehearsed by one of the inspired Writers (l), a Man according to God's own heart (m), is so far from being

(g) Gen. 30. 26. (h) Gen. 39. 21, 23.

(i) Gen. ibid. and cc. 40. 41. (k) Gen. 39. 23. (l) Ps. 105. v. 16—24.

(m) 1 Kings, c. 15. 3.

being taxed with the least intimation of guilt in any one circumstance attending it, that the whole process, without any exceptions whatever, is there represented as the effect of that divine Wisdom, with which he was inspired from above.

XXII. A FURTHER scriptural evidence, that the conduct of Joseph in purchasing so many millions of his fellow-creatures, and reducing them to the condition of Slaves, met the entire approbation of God, and was therefore perfectly consonant to the sacred Laws of Nature, is that remarkable declaration of the Word of God, registered in the First Book of CHRONICLES, c. 5. v. 1—3, which assigns the true reason for transferring the right of Primogeniture, or First-born, from the Family of Reuben, eldest son of Jacob, to the Family of Joseph; which, as it is expressly mentioned in that place, was Reuben's incestuous conversation with Bilhah, his Father's concubine (n).—But is it credible, consistently with the essential justice of God, that he should deprive Reuben's children of their Primogeniture or birth-right, for having once transgressed one of the Laws of Nature, and yet should at the same time, even in preference to Judah the Messiah's progenitor, give it to those of Joseph, who, by the very act of enslaving so many millions of his fellow-creatures, and using them as he did, must have necessarily incurred the horrid guilt of reiterated transgressions of several of those sacred Laws, if, what is so confidently asserted be true, that the SLAVE-TRADE, or the purchasing of Slaves, is an iniquitous unnatural pursuit, and a crime of the blackest die, in direct opposition to every principle of Nature? How could any one in such chimerical supposition reconcile the visible partiality

(n) Gen. 35. 22.

tiality of God's conduct with his own Scriptural declarations of the eternal and immutable rectitude of his justice?

XXIII. ONE evidence more, drawn from the same scriptural source of conviction, will, I hope, be sufficient to evince the irreproachableness of Joseph's conduct in the transaction now before us. Every body knows, who knows any thing of Scripture, that the speeches made to their Children by the holy Patriarchs of old, prior to their departure from this world, called in the language of Scripture *Blessing the Children* (o), were so many prophetic declarations of the Word of God, predicting to them the future events that should distinguish them and their families, and entailing upon them and their posterity that portion of happiness or misery, to which their moral or immoral conduct entitled them. This being an undoubted truth, let us now examine with an attentive eye some of the most material circumstances of that solemn Blessing, which Jacob bestowed on Joseph and his Brethren a little before his death (p).

1. This Blessing was bestowed on Joseph and his Brethren about ten years after Joseph had enslaved all the inhabitants of Egypt, excepting those of the Sacerdotal Order (q).

2. Jacob in this Blessing reproaches Reuben, his eldest son, with the infamy of his incestuous crime in the strongest terms; and declares, that, in punishment of it, *he should not excel*, but should be as *unstable as water*.

3. Simeon and Levi are branded by the holy Patriarch with being *Instruments of cruelty*; he abhors their counsels; calls their company dishonourable; *curles*

(o) Gen. 27. v. 4, 7, 10, 12, 19, &c. (p) Gen. 49. v. 1, &c.

(q) Gen. 47. 28.

curse the fierceness of their anger, and the cruelty of their wrath, *because in their anger*, says he, *they slew a man*; meaning Shechem the Hivite and his father Hamor, together with all his male subjects, whom *they slew with the sword* (*r*); and, as a punishment of their barbarous cruelty, he declares they should be divided and scattered in the land of Promise.

4. When the Holy Patriarch comes to bless his son Joseph, he expresses himself in the following emphatic and divine strain. “ Joseph is a fruitful bough; even “ a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run “ over the wall. The archers have sorely grieved him, “ and shot at him, and hated him: but his bow abode “ in strength, and the arms of his hands were made “ strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob: “ from thence is the Shepherd, the stone of Israel; “ even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee, “ and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with bles- “ sings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that “ lieth under, blessings of the breast, and of the womb. “ The blessings of thy father have prevailed above “ the blessings of my progenitors: unto the utmost “ bounds of the everlasting hills, they shall be on the “ head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of “ him, that was separate from his brethren (*s*).”

IN these prophetic and beautiful expressions, exhibiting in the most pleasing colours the personal character of Joseph, and the blessings entailed on his posterity, literally fulfilled afterwards, we can perceive nothing but what necessarily supposes in Joseph the greatest innocence of heart, the most unimpeachable rectitude of conduct, and the most gracious acceptance with his Creator. No part of his conduct is here branded

branded with disgrace, with the least appearance of the smallest guilt, or with the most distant intimation of reproof.

BUT, were the **SLAVE-TRADE** as criminal in its nature as it is pretended, were it a pursuit hateful in the sight of God, and an atrocious encroachment on the sacred rights of justice and humanity, would Jacob, or, rather, would God, who spoke by his mouth, have overlooked the atrocity of a crime big with such an accumulation of guilt? Would he have engaged his word to be his help and protection, and to bestow such a plenitude of blessings on the crown of his head, as soon almost as he had concluded that Slave-contract we are speaking of, and at the very time he was keeping in bondage so many millions of his fellow-creatures? Would God, I say, or could God, without a most glaring opposition to the essential rights of his own justice, have acted thus in the case of Joseph, and at the same time rebuke his brethren, Reuben, Simeon, and Levi, in the severest terms, and inflict a lasting punishment on them and their posterity (though the former had only one accusation against him, and the two latter pleaded in justification of their violent proceedings the revenge due to their sister Dinah, and the honour of their Father's house (1)), had not Joseph's recent conduct in reducing so many millions of free Africans to the abject condition of Slaves, as well as every other transaction of his life, been perfectly agreeable to the invariable tenor of those sacred Laws, of which he alone was the Author and Judge?

To every one of these questions there is but one direct answer; which, as it must necessarily be in the negative, must of consequence evince to the meanest capacity

capacity, that the SLAVE-TRADE has the indisputable sanction of God in its support.

XXIV. I will not conceal, or even disguise, in favour of the Cause I have espoused, what, I apprehend, will be objected to the argument I have just enforced, from the Scriptural account of Joseph's extensive purchase of African Slaves.—It will be objected, I presume, that Joseph's purchase was not a forcible purchase; that the Egyptians, whom he bought, offered themselves of their own accord, and desired he would buy them at a certain price (v); and that, of course, the free and voluntary cession they made of their liberties and persons justified Joseph's conduct, and rendered his contract just and valid, without injuring the natural rights of justice and humanity; which being far otherwise in the usual practice of the SLAVE-TRADE, in which persons are sold and bought without their consent, the inferences drawn in vindication of that Trade from the practice of Joseph, can have no weight of conviction in support of the SLAVE-TRADE.—No one, I trust, will tax me with partiality to my Cause from the statement of this argument against myself: I have given it, I think, all the weight it is able to carry: how much it will weigh in the scale of sound and unprejudiced reason, will soon appear from the following considerations.

XXV. 1. I can by no means allow, that Joseph's purchase of Pharaoh's subjects was not a forcible purchase in fact, and in strictness of language. It is true, the Egyptians themselves, without any apparent explicit proposal on the part of Joseph, desired him to buy them for bread: but did they ever think of making that offer, whilst they had any bread to eat, or any

E

means

means left for buying or procuring it ? Did not Joseph himself, prior to that offer, pave, as it were, the way to it, by engrossing all the corn in the land of Egypt, and by selling it to them for money and cattle, till they had neither money nor cattle to give in exchange ?

— Let us hear how they address themselves to him : their petition will best explain, how far their offer may be called voluntary on their part. “ They came unto him the second year, *says the sacred Writer*, and said unto him : We will not hide it from my Lord, how that our money is spent ; my Lord also hath our herds of cattle : there is not aught left in the sight of my Lord, but our bodies and our lands. Wherefore shall we die before thine eyes, both we and our land ? Buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh ; and give us feed, that we may live and not die, that the land be not desolate.”

Is this the language of persons, who freely, voluntarily, of their own accord, and without any compulsion whatever, offer themselves to sale ? Is it not evident from the very words of their own address, that, finding themselves reduced to the last extremity of indigence, and seeing nothing before their eyes but inevitable death or slavery, they were forced, through dread of the former, to submit to the latter ? And can there be a more forcible contract, than that which is made only through fear of death, only to avoid inevitable death ? — The cession then made by the Egyptians of their liberties and persons, was neither in fact, nor in strictness of language, nor, indeed, in conformity with the Scriptural account of the circumstances attending it, a free and voluntary cession. Had not therefore Joseph had better grounds in the principles of his Natural Religion, of which he was a most strict

strict observer, to assure himself of the justice of his contract, the cession of the Egyptians, forcible in the strictest propriety of the word, would never have rendered his Contract just and valid in the sight of God.

2. But even granting, for a moment, that the Egyptians did really make a free and voluntary cession of their liberties and persons; I do not see, upon what principle of reason their cession could justify Joseph's conduct and make his purchase lawful, if, as it is so confidently asserted, the **SLAVE-TRADE** be essentially unjust and illicit in its own nature. For, if to purchase those of our own species be highly criminal in itself, be an unjust invasion on the rights of justice and humanity, and directly opposite to the Sacred Laws of Nature, how is it possible to conceive, that any cession whatever of the party to be purchased should make that just and lawful in the sight of God, which by his unalterable eternal laws is essentially the very reverse? Can human agreements dispense in the laws of God? Whatever is essentially unjust and illicit to purchase, must be as essentially unjust and illicit to sell.—The objection then grounded on the pretended voluntary cession of the Egyptians, however plausible it may appear at first, is utterly inconclusive and ill founded.

XXVI. I could easily produce a greater number of distinguished Characters within this period of the Law of Nature, whose uniform manner of acting, with reference to the present subject, would afford me an additional number of arguments in vindication of the **SLAVE-TRADE**. But as the Sacred Book, where those great Patterns of every religious and social virtue are exhibited, is in every body's hands, and, as I have sufficiently demonstrated, I think, from the Scriptur-

account of two of the most eminent Characters within the same period, that the SLAVE-TRADE has the indisputable sanction of Divine Authority, and is in exact conformity with the principles of the Law of Nature, as delineated in the Sacred Writings of the Word of God, I shall now proceed to demonstrate in the subsequent Section, that it is equally conformable to the principles of the Mosaic Law.

## SECTION

## SECTION II.

*Scriptural Researches on the licitness of the Slave-Trade, shewing its conformity with the principles of the Mosaic Law delineated in the Sacred Writings.*

I. **T**HE Mosaic Law, called also the Written Law, and the Mosaic Dispensation, succeeded the Dispensation of the Law of Nature: not, as if, by the publication of the former (*a*), the latter had been totally abrogated, or suffered the least relaxation in any of its laws, which are of perpetual obligation; but because the Almighty willing to establish a Covenant with his Chosen People, the Children of Israel, added to the former obligations such other statutes, Laws, and ceremonies, as were to distinguish them from every other Nation in the World. This Law is very frequently called, even in Scripture, the Law of Moses (*b*), and Moses is said to have been the Law-giver or the Legislator of the Children of Israel; not because it was framed by him, but because the Almighty delivered it to them through his ministry, and he committed it to writing. How long this Law was in force from the first promulgation of it, has been the subject of much inquiry among the Learned: but, without entering now into a critical discussion of this controverted point, we may safely venture to fix that period, without either advantage or prejudice to the Subject of our Researches, to the time of the Apostles Council held at Jerusalem, in which the Law of Circumcision and other Legal observances were, by an express

(*a*) Exod. c. 29, &c.

(*b*) Josh. c. 8. v. 31, 32. Ibid. 23. 6. I. Kings, 2. 3.  
II. Kings, 23, 25.

express Decree of that Council, declared unnecessary to Salvation, and consequently of no further obligation (c). This Council, according to the computation of Archbishop Usher, was held in the Year of the World 4055; and as the Law was promulg'd in the Year 2513, according to the chronological computation of the same Author; it follows, that the Law of Moses, or the Mosaic Dispensation, continued in force 1542 Years.

II. Now, before I proceed to shew, that the Laws and Principles of this second Divine Dispensation of Religion, not only never prohibited the SLAVE-TRADE, but gave, on the contrary, a positive sanction to the prosecution of it; I judge necessary to apprise the Reader, that the arguments I mean to enforce in vindication of the SLAVE-TRADE, as confined to this second period of true Religion, shall be entirely grounded on such written laws and principles of internal moral rectitude, as constituted the true morality of that Religion; and not on such Legal observances and practices, as were peculiar to it, and constituted only the ritual, typical, or ceremonial part of its frame. The following decisive instances of the former sort, will, without producing others, be sufficient, I hope, to establish my assertion beyond the power of reply.

### *E X O D U S.*

III. It is singular enough, that the very first Law, or Judgement, in the Scripture language, enacted by God himself immediately after he had delivered the Ten Commandments to his People, should be respecting the SLAVE-TRADE; and that also with the additional circumstance of not restraining them from purchasing their own brethren, their own flesh and blood!

“ These

(c) Acts, 15 1, &c.

“ These are the judgements, *says God to Moses*, which “ thou shalt set before them. If thou buy an Hebrew “ Servant, six years he shall serve, and in the seventh “ he shall go out free for nothing. If he came in by “ himself, he shall go out by himself; if he were “ married, then his wife shall go out with him. If “ his Master have given him a wife, and she have “ borne him sons and daughters; the wife and her “ children shall be her Master’s, and he shall go out “ by himself (d).”

IV. HERE, it is evident in the first place, that, however limited the time was of the Slavery of an Hebrew, he was yet in the strictest sense of the word a true and real Slave for the time; for he was his Master’s property, bought for a certain price; and his Master, on this account, had an undoubted right and power to sell him again to another person before the expiration of that time. But, were the SLAVE-TRADE, or the purchasing of those of our own species, and dealing in human flesh, a pursuit of that heinous and crying nature, as to be essentially unlawful, essentially incompatible with the principles of reason, nature, and true Religion, would God, Justice and Sanctity itself, have authorized the practice of it with so positive, so manifest, so explicit a sanction, I do not say for the space of six years, but even for a single moment, at the very time he was making his Holy Covenant with his chosen People, and teaching them the very principles of true Religion?

AGAIN: the Hebrew, thus bought by his Brother, and reduced to the condition of a Slave, under the express sanction of God, was a Child of the Circumcision: now, Circumcision, under the Mosaic Dispensation, was a solemn, religious Rite, answering that of Baptism

**Baptism in the Christian Law:** it was a token of the Covenant between God and his People (*e*), as essentially requisite in every male person, who hoped for acceptance with God (*f*), as is Baptism in the Covenant of the New Law. If then, notwithstanding the prerogative of Circumcision, which made the professors of the Mosaic Law true Children of God, true believers, and members of his Church, a free circumcised Israelite was still subject to the law of human bondage or slavery, and that even under the dominion of one of his own Communion and Church; from what maxim or principle of true Religion and justice does it follow, that a Slave, once admitted into the Covenant of the New Law, acquires by his admission a right to his emancipation from human bondage? that is, a right to deprive his Master of his property?

In fine; it is manifest from the very letter of the Law just quoted, that, even in the Case of an Hebrew reduced to the condition of a Slave for a limited time, the Master's purchase of that Slave was so essentially just and lawful in every part of it, that, though, by an especial ordinance of God peculiar to that People only, the Slave was to be released from bondage in the seventh year, or the year of the Jubilee; yet the right of property, acquired by that purchase, was declared by God to be so vested in the Master, that, if the Master had given a wife to his Slave, that is, if the Slave had married a wife during the time of his servitude with the consent of his Master, both she and her children, if he had any by her, became the Master's property for ever: in which Case, it is worth observing, that the Slave thus emancipated, though a member of the true Church, was ordered to *go out by himself*, and leave his wife and children behind.—A separation

ration this between husband and wife, father and children, well deserving the particular attention of every religious and humane advocate for African Liberty!— And can any one after this entertain the most distant doubt on the licitness of the SLAVE-TRADE, so positively, so unequivocally, so strongly authorized by this written ordinance of the Word of God?

### *L E V I T I C U S.*

V. THE farther I proceed in my Scriptural Researches, the stronger the Evidences appear to me in favour of the SLAVE-TRADE. Indeed, I have every encouragement given me in this Sacred Book of LEVITICUS to advance a step farther, and maintain, that the SLAVE-TRADE, has not only the sanction of Divine Authority in its support, but was also positively encouraged (I had almost said, *commanded*) by that Authority, under the Dispensation of the Mosaic Law. The following plain and explicit words of one of the laws respecting that Trade, and registered in this Book, can admit of no other construction.

“ Both thy bond-men and bond-maids, *says the Supreme Law-giver*, which thou shalt have, shall be “ of the heathen that are round about you; of them “ shall ye buy bond-men and bond-maids. More- “ over, of the Children of the Strangers that do so- “ journ among you; of them shall ye buy; and of “ their families that are with you, which they begat “ in your land: and they shall be your possession. “ And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your “ children after you to inherit them for a possession; “ they shall be your bond-men for ever (g).”

VI. IF there be meaning in language, or sense in words, here is certainly a Law enacted by Divine Authority, which does not only give a most positive and

F unexceptionable

unexceptionable sanction to the licitness of the **SLAVE-TRADE**, but seems farther to lay, as it were, an injunction on the Children of Israel to prosecute that Traffic under no other restriction whatever, but that of confining their purchases of perpetual Slaves to the heathen round about them, and the Strangers, that sojourned among them; for the words of the Law-giver evidently imply more than a mere permission or leave: He does not say, speaking of the Heathen and Sojourners, *Of them MAY ye buy bond-men and bond-maids*, but, *of them SHALL ye buy bond-men and bond-maids*.

AGAIN: the words of this Law, and they are the words of God, do expressly declare, that Slaves thus purchased from the Heathen and Sojourners among them, shall be the *Possession*, that is, the real and lawful property, of the purchasers: a property so strictly their own, that they shall bequeath it to their Children at their death, as a part of their just and lawful inheritance, a part of their paternal estate, an estate for ever, for *they shall be your bond-men for ever*, says the Law: that is, an hereditary estate with all the emoluments arising from it; and, consequently, with all the children born from them, agreeably to the tenour of that Law of Exodus, which has been explained in the IV<sup>th</sup> Number of this SECTION; for otherwise the children of a Heathen Slave or a Stranger would have enjoyed a privilege, which an Hebrew Slave was denied, though a Slave only for a limited time.

VII. FROM this most decisive, most explicit, and irrefragable authority of the Written Word of God, visibly encouraging the prosecution of the **SLAVE-TRADE**, and declaring in the most categorical language that words can devise, that a Slave is the real, indisputable, and lawful property of the purchaser and his heirs for ever, it necessarily follows by force of consequence,

consequence, that either the SLAVE-TRADE must be in its own intrinsic nature a just and an honest Trade, and by no means deserving those harsh epithets and names with which it is so frequently branded and degraded ; or, that, if it does still deserve those odious names and epithets in consequence of its intrinsic turpitude and immorality, the Almighty did so far forget himself, when he made the above Law, as to patronize a manifest injustice, encourage a most criminal violation of his other laws, and give his sacred sanction to what humanity itself must for ever abhor and detest.—As there can be no medium betwixt these two unavoidable inferences, and the latter is one of the most daring blasphemies that the human heart can conceive, I leave the religious Reader to judge for himself, which side of the Question is the safest to embrace.

### J O S H U A.

VIII. THE prudent and well concerted stratagem of the inhabitants of Gibeon, with all the circumstances attending its final issue, so minutely described in the IX<sup>th</sup> Chapter of this Sacred Book, will, when viewed in its proper light, add no small weight of Authority to the justice of the SLAVE-TRADE. The Scriptural account of this entertaining transaction, long as it may appear to some, cannot well be contracted, without injuring its beautiful texture: the following is a literal transcript of it.

- v. 3. And when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done unto Jericho, and to Ai,
- 4. They did work wily, and went and made as if they had been Ambassadors, and took old sacks upon their asses, and wine-bottles, old, and rent and bound up :
- 5. And old shoes, and clouted upon their feet, and old garments upon them: and all the bread of their provision was dry and mouldy.
- 6. And

6. And they went to Joshua, unto the Camp of Gilgal, and laid unto him, and to the men of Israel: we be come from a far country ; now therefore make ye a league with us.

7. And the men of Israel said unto the Hivites : per-adventure ye dwell among us, and how shall we make a league with you ?

8. And they said unto Joshua: we are thy servants, And Joshua said unto them : who are ye ? and from whence come ye ?

9. And they said unto him : from a very far country thy servants are come, because of the name of the Lord thy God ; for we have heard of the fame of him, and all that he did in Egypt,

10. And all that he did to the two Kings of the Amorites, that were beyond Jordan, to Sihon King of Heshbon, and to Og King of Bashan, which was at Ashtaroth.

11. Wherefore our Elders and all the Inhabitants of our country spake to us, saying : take victuals with you for the journey, and go to meet them, and say unto them : we are your servants : therefore now make ye a league with us.

12. This our bread we took hot for our provision out of our houses, on the day we came forth to go unto you ; but now behold, it is dry, and it is mouldy.

13. And these bottles of wine which were filled, were new ; and behold, they be rent ; and these our garments and our shoes are become old, by reason of the very long journey,

14. And the men took of their victuals, and asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord.

15. And Joshua made peace with them, and made a league with them, to let them live : and the Princes of the Congregation sware unto them,

16. And

16. And it came to pass at the end of three days, after they had made a league with them, that they heard that they were neighbours, and that they dwelt among them.

17. And the Children of Israel journeyed, and came into their Cities on the third day: now their Cities were Gibeon, and Chephirah, and Beeroth, and Kiriath-jearim.

18. And the Children of Israel smote them not, because the Princes of the Congregation had sworn unto them by the Lord God of Israel: and all the Congregation murmured against the Princes.

19. But all the Princes said unto all the Congregation: We have sworn unto them by the Lord God of Israel: now therefore we may not touch them.

20. This we will do them; we will even let them live, lest wrath be upon us, because of the oath which we sware unto them.

21. And the Princes said unto them: let them live (but let them be hewers of wood, and drawers of water unto all the Congregation), as the Princes had promised them.

22. And Joshua called for them, and he spake unto them, saying: wherefore have ye beguiled us, saying, We are very far from you? when ye dwell among us.

23. Now therefore ye are cursed, and there shall none of you be freed from being bond-men, and hewers of wood, and drawers of water for the house of my God,

24. And they answered Joshua, and said: because it was certainly told thy servants, how that the Lord thy God commanded his servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you, therefore we were sore afraid of

of our lives, because of you, and have done this thing.

25. And now, behold, we are in thine hand : as it seemeth good and right unto thee to do unto us, do.
26. And so did he unto them, and delivered them out of the hand of the Children of Israel, and they slew them not.
27. And Joshua made them that day hewers of wood, and drawers of water for the Congregation, and for the Altar of the Lord, even unto this day, in the place which he should chuse.

IX. THE following observations seem to arise spontaneously from the circumstances related in this interesting portion of Scripture.

1. The Gibeonites were in the number of those inhabitants of the Land of Canaan, who, by the express command of God, were to be utterly proscribed, and driven out of the Land, by the Children of Israel : *Thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor with their Gods*, said the Almighty to his People ; *they shall not dwell in thy Land* (b).

2. To ward this impending doom, of which they were well apprized, as appears from their reply to Joshua, they had recourse to a stratagem, which, for want of Joshua consulting the divine Oracle, succeeded to the utmost of their wishes ; for they made a league, and a treaty of peace and amity with Joshua and his People ; and by virtue of this National Treaty, which was confirmed to them with the solemn sanction of an oath, and never annulled, but rather ratified in the sequel by God himself, they were exempted from the general doom, and became in every sense of the word free allies and friends to the Children of Israel.—Indeed, the sentiments of Religion and humility, so visible

visible both in their first address and their reply to Joshua's charge, and their not joining in the general league of the neighbouring Kings, who all combined with one accord to fight against Israel (*i*), speak a sense of repentance, which might have induced the Almighty to reverse his sentence, and suffer their stratagem to succeed.

3. As soon as this was discovered, we find, that the Gibeonites were all consigned by Joshua to perpetual Slavery, *unto this day*; that is, with all their posterity; notwithstanding the sentence of proscription, the only one that the Almighty had pronounced against them, and was to be executed by Joshua, had been entirely reversed; notwithstanding they had every claim, by virtue of the recent Treaty they had so solemnly concluded with him and his people, to all the privileges and franchises of free Allies.

X. To say, that the sentence of death pronounced against the Gibeonites in several places of Scripture (*k*), was afterwards changed by the Almighty into that of perpetual and hereditary bondage or slavery, is to advance what is never to be found in any part of the Sacred Records; from the whole tenour of which it appears manifest, that the perpetual bondage, to which they were consigned with all their posterity, was the sole act and deed of Joshua, suggested apparently by the Princes of the Congregation of Israel, who, prior to Joshua's curse upon them, in order to silence the murmurs of the multitude, had declared their intention of employing the Gibeonites in the servile occupation of *bewers of wood, and drawers of water unto all the Congregation*.

Now, had Joshua's sentence of perpetual bondage been only a commutation of that of death, to which the

(*i*) Josh. c. 9. v. 1, 2.    (*k*) Exod. 23. 31—33. Deut. 7. 2, &c.

the Almighty had condemned the Gibeonites, had it not been lawful in itself, on other accounts, to reduce the innocent as well as the guilty to the condition of Slaves; the sentence of perpetual bondage pronounced by Joshua, ought, one would imagine, to have extended no farther, than the persons of the Gibeonites then living, any more than did the sentence of death, in lieu of which that of perpetual bondage is said to have been substituted. The slavery then of their innocent posterity, at least, cannot be said to have been in lieu of death, to which certainly they had never been condemned.

It being therefore evident from the uniform tenour of the Sacred Writings, that neither the reduction of the Gibeonites then living, nor that of their guiltless descendants, yet unborn, to perpetual Slavery, was ever condemned by any mark or intimation whatever of God's displeasure, but manifestly ratified in the sequel by several undoubted assurances of his divine approbation; it is easy to conclude, whether the reducing of the innocent as well as the guilty part of our fellow-creatures to the condition of Slaves, or even to hereditary bondage or Slavery, be in its own nature licit or illicit, criminal or just.

XI. As a mark of the Almighty's undoubted approbation of Joshua's conduct in the transaction just before us, we find in the continuation of this history (1), that He even secured to his People the possession of these Slaves, and their posterity, by a most signal victory, which he enabled them to obtain over five Kings of the Amorites; who, in consequence of the Gibeonites having made a league and a treaty of peace with Joshua and his People, joined all their forces against them, and made a vigorous attempt to invade this

(1) Josh. c. 10.

this new acquisition of the Children of Israel. The exertions of his divine power for securing to his People this new acquired property of Slaves were so wonderfully great, that he even fought *in Person* against the invaders ; for “ The Lord, *says the Sacred Writer*, “ discomfitted them before Israel, and slew them with “ a great slaughter at Gibeon, and chased them along “ the way that goeth up to Bethhoron, and smote them “ to Azekah, and unto Makkedah. And it came “ to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in “ the going down to Bethhoron, that the Lord cast “ down great stones from heaven upon them unto “ Azekah, and they died : they were more which died “ with hailstones, than they whom the Children of “ Israel slew with the sword (m).”

AND, in order to render the victory still more complete, and the part he took in defending the rights of his people over the Gibeonites more visible to the whole world, he even wrought a miracle of the most singular kind ; for, *barking*, as the Sacred Page expresses it, *unto the voice of a Man*, that is, of Joshua, who, in the heat of action, ordered *the Sun to stand still upon Gibeon, and the Moon in the valley of Ajalon*, he stayed them both *about a whole day, until the People had avenged themselves upon their enemies (n)*, for attempting to destroy the inhabitants of Gibeon their bond-slaves.

XII. If these wonderful achievements of the power of God in favour of his chosen People in the very cause of protecting the persons, whom they had so lately reduced to perpetual and hereditary bondage, are not to be considered as so many evident testimonies of his divine approbation of the immediate object of the **SLAVE-TRADE**, and a positive sanction to the licitness

(m) Josh. c. 10. v. 10, 11.

(n) Josh. c. 10. v. 12, 14.

of it, but are still consistent with any intrinsic moral turpitude inherent to the nature of that Trade ; the abettors of this opinion must necessarily maintain, that the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, in direct opposition to his own essential attributes and perfections, in manifest contradiction with his own moral laws and commandments, and in vindication of ill-gotten property, displayed to the World the most extraordinary exertions of his Omnipotence, and disturbed the very course of Nature to make it subservient to the vilest of purposes, injustice and oppression.—As the inference is as blasphemous as it is necessary, the very mentioning of it will, I flatter myself, be sufficient to determine the judgement of any religious and candid Reader in favour of the inherent moral licitnes of the **SLAVE-TRADE**.

XIII. I HAVE, I think, sufficiently proved from the Scriptural Passages I have produced in the series of this **SECOND PART**, that the **SLAVE-TRADE** has the positive sanction of Divine Authority in its support, and is perfectly consonant to the Principles of the Mosaic Dispensation delineated in the Sacred Writings of the Word of God.

I HAVE, however, this one thing to observe before I proceed to the **THIRD PART**, in order to preclude every avenue to groundless objections ; that there is not a Place in all the Writings of the Word of God, whether of the **OLD** or of the **NEW TESTAMENT**, that does so much as insinuate in the most distant manner, that the Slaves bought either within the period of the Law of Nature, that of the Mosaic Dispensation, or that of the Christian Law, were to serve during a certain number of years and no longer, except the Hebrew Slaves ; who, for reasons peculiar only to that People, and not applicable even to Christian Slaves, were to serve

serve no longer than six years in the capacity of Bond-Slaves. In every other case, the words BOND-MAN, BOND-WOMAN, BOND-MAID, BOND-SERVANT, SERVANT UNDER THE YOKE, imply, in the Scripture-language, perpetual and unlimited bondage, bondage for life, both of the male and female reduced to that condition, and even of their posterity or children, if they had any.—Nor is there one instance to be met with in the Sacred Volumes, of the manumission or emancipation of a Slave of either sex, except of the Hebrew race, who ever obtained release from bondage, on account of having served any determinate number of years.

THE dismission of Hagar, bond-woman to Abraham, from her Master's house, is so far from being an instance of this kind, that every circumstance attending her discharge seems to prove the very reverse (o). She was *sent away* by Abraham, at the earnest solicitation of his wife Sarai, whose counsel the Almighty ordered him to follow: but the reluctance he shewed to turn her out of his house, when it was first proposed to him by Sarai, for *the thing was very grievous in his sight* (or, according to the Original, *The word was very bad in the eyes of Abram*), and the reason of her dismission, evidently shew that her discharge was not in consequence of any contract whatever, by which she was bound to serve a determinate number of years and no longer, there being not the least intimation given in the Sacred History of any such contract or agreement, but because her son's behaviour to Isaac, the promised and right Heir of the Family, was exceedingly odious and very alarming to Sarai; who, dreading the consequences of Ishmael's *persecution* of young Isaac, for so the Apostle styles it (p), insisted on his being *cast out* together with his mother Hagar.

XIV. THE Scriptural acceptation and extent of the word BONDAGE, and the relatives to it, being thus fixed and ascertained from the very letter and uniform tenour of Scripture itself, no arguments whatever, grounded on the true and real sense in which that word and its relatives are used in the Sacred Page, will ever evince, that a Slave, within the period of any of the Three Dispensations of true Religion mentioned in the Sacred Annals of the Word of God, not born an Hebrew, was ever bound by contract or otherwise to serve only a limited number of years, at the expiration of which he obtained his freedom, and was left at liberty to chuse for himself.

**SECTION**

## S E C T I O N III.

*Scriptural Researches on the licitness of the Slave-Trade, shewing its conformity with the principles of the Christian Dispensation delineated in the Sacred Writings.*

I. **T**HE Christian Dispensation, called frequently the Christian Law, the Law of Christ, the Christian Religion, the Law of Grace, the New Law, and the New Covenant or the New Testament, is that most sublime and perfect System of Faith and Morality, which the Eternal Wisdom of the Father, Christ Jesus our Lord, both preached in Person, and sealed with his precious blood. As this New Law and Gospel of salvation is to remain in full force until the consummation of all things, or till time shall be no more, it is not in the power of any creature to ascertain the exact time of its duration and existence from the first promulgation of it; for *Of that day, and that hour knoweth no man, no not the Angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the FATHER* (a).

II. THE principal transactions relative to this New Law are registered in the several inspired Writings, that compose the Sacred Volume commonly styled THE NEW TESTAMENT. The principles and moral duties of perpetual obligation respecting *Right* and *Wrong*, *Justice* and *Injustice*, registered in this Sacred Volume, being evidently dictated by the HOLY SPIRIT of God, and God himself, cannot consistently with the essential infallibility of his eternal Wisdom, bear the least opposition to the principles and moral duties of perpetual obligation respecting, in like manner, *Right* and *Wrong*, *Justice* and *Injustice*, dictated by the same

(a) Mark, c. 13. v. 32.

same infallible SPIRIT, and registered in the several inspired Writings, that compose the Sacred Volume commonly styled THE OLD TESTAMENT, comprehending such transactions, as relate to both the Natural and the Mosaic Laws.—Were it possible to be otherwise, God would not be consistent with himself, and the Religion of the New Testament, instead of being the perfection and accomplishment, would be the reproach and condemnation of both the former Laws, Natural and Mosaic, on the truth of which its very existence depends.

III. FROM this undeniable position it follows necessarily, that, as the Writings of both the Testaments have the same weight of Authority, essentially incapable of contradicting itself, in support of those principles and decisions, enacted and registered in their respective Records, concerning the intrinsic morality or immorality of human actions, whatever is declared in the One to be intrinsically good or bad, just or unjust, licit or illicit, must inevitably be so according to the principles of the Other.—If, therefore, the SLAVE-TRADE appears, as, I trust, it does, from the preceding train of Scriptural arguments, in perfect harmony with the principles and decisions of the Word of God, registered in the Sacred Writings of the Old Testament, respecting the intrinsic nature of that Trade, this, of course, can bear no opposition to, but must necessarily be in equal perfect harmony with, the principles and decisions of the Word of God respecting *Right* and *Justice*, registered in the Sacred Writings of the New.

THIS general but forcible argument, were it even unsupported by any collateral evidences from the Writings of the New Testament, would be fully sufficient to verify my third and last assertion respecting the

the Licitness of the SLAVE-TRADE, as perfectly conformable to the principles of the Christian Dispensation.

IV. I HAVE been the more particular in bringing this last part of my Scriptural Researches to this central point of view, as I have more than one reason to apprehend, that several of my Readers will be apt to imagine, that, by the establishment of the Christian Religion, the Law of Moses was wholly abolished and annulled in every part of it, and to every intent and purpose, both typical and moral, of its original institution; and that, of course, the arguments drawn in vindication of the SLAVE-TRADE from the Writings of the Old Testament, can have no weight of conviction or authority with persons, who are subject to no other Laws and Ordinances, but those of a Dispensation, by which that was entirely laid aside.

V. TRUE as this assertion is with respect to the ritual, typical, and ceremonial part of the Mosaic Law, which, in this sense, is now utterly abolished, and no longer obligatory to the Professors of the Gospel, it is not less erroneous and false with respect to those fundamental principles of righteousness enacted in that Law, which relate to the intrinsic morality or immorality, licitness or illicitness of human actions; which, from the invariable nature of *Right* and *Wrong*, *Justice* and *Injustice*, must be of perpetual obligation, and as unchangeable as God himself; who never did, nor ever could alter by any Dispensation whatever those eternal principles and laws, which are the very basis and foundation of true Religion, and consequently of the Religion of Christ.

WE have no less an authority in confirmation of this indisputable Doctrine, than the very words of the Son of God, who, in that divine Sermon on the Mount,

in which he gave his Disciples a most minute and circumstantial account of the principles and tenets of his Gospel, condemned the above erroneous opinion in the most explicit terms, and forbade them even to think of it: *Think not, said he, that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfil (b).*

It was on the principle of this Doctrine of the Son of God, and on purpose to guard against every exception to arguments drawn from the Writings of the Old Testament in favour of the SLAVE-TRADE, which some persons would be apt to make in consequence of the above erroneous opinion, that I especially apprized the Reader in the II<sup>nd</sup> Number of the last SECTION, that the arguments I meant to enforce in that Section in vindication of that Trade, would be entirely grounded, as they certainly are, on such written and explicit laws and principles of internal moral rectitude, as constituted the true morality of the Mosaic Dispensation, and not on such Legal observances and practices, as were peculiar to it, and constituted only the ritual, typical, or ceremonial part of its frame.

VI. THE permanent and indefectible authority of the Old Testament, and the necessary conformity of the New with the principles and declarations of the former respecting the intrinsic nature of *Right* and *Wrong*, *Justice* and *Injustice*, being thus firmly established and ascertained; I shall now proceed, for argument's sake, to substantiate in a more particular manner the merits of the present Controversy with reference to the principles and tenets of the New Testament; which, from the unanswerable, though general, argument just enforced, appears already to give a sanction to the licitness of the SLAVE-TRADE, the intrinsic morality of which is so evidently warranted by

by those invariable principles and decisions of the Old, with which, as proved before, it must necessarily agree.

VII. THAT there is nothing in the Writings of the New Testament, that can be produced in justification of the SLAVE-TRADE, has been confidently asserted by many ; and from this *supposed silence* of the Inspired Writers, they have as confidently concluded, that the professors of Christianity are not justifiable in prosecuting a Trade, which, not having, in their opinion, the Sanction of the New Testament, must of course be essentially opposite to the principles of true Christianity, which forbids in the most explicit terms, and under the severest punishments, all acts of injustice, unnaturalness, and oppression.

VIII. THE stronger this inference, founded indeed on a false supposition, appears to the advocates for African Liberty against the licitness of the SLAVE-TRADE, the more powerful the following arguments must appear to them ; which, from the same negative principle, not of *supposed*, but *real*, silence respecting the pretended illicitness of it, amounting in fact to a positive sanction in our Case, seem manifestly to evince, that the SLAVE-TRADE bears no opposition whatever to the principles of the Christian Law.

1. If the Writings of the New Testament mention nothing, as it is *falsely supposed*, in vindication of the SLAVE-TRADE, neither do they *in reality* and *truth* mention any thing in condemnation of it ; if then the *supposed* silence of the Inspired Writers respecting the licitness of that Trade, that is, their not mentioning that Trade at all, as it is *supposed*, can be brought as an argument of its moral inconsistency with the principles of true Christianity ; the *real* silence of the same respecting the pretended illicitness of it, that is, their not condemning the Trade at all, though publicly

lickly practised in their time, and by the very persons whom they were deputed to teach the principles and duties of Christianity, must be a stronger argument by far of the inherent moral conformity of the SLAVE-TRADE with the principles and tenets of the Religion of Christ: for it shews in the strongest light, that the first Teachers of Christianity, who were also the Inspired Writers of the New Testament, never considered the SLAVE-TRADE, or had been taught by their Master to consider it, as an infraction of any of the principles or moral precepts of his Gospel.

2. In effect; this constant and uniform silence of the Sacred Writers of the New Testament in a matter of such public notoriety; I mean their never disapproving the practice of a Trade, in which the rights of Christian justice and humanity are said to be so materially injured, ought to attract the particular attention of every impartial inquirer into the merits of the present Controversy.

It is an absolute fact, attested by all Historians, both Sacred and Prophane, that at the very time that Christianity made its appearance in the World, as well as at the time that the Apostles and Disciples of Christ were employed in preaching and propagating throughout the World his holy Gospel and Doctrine, both before and after the same had been committed to writing, that is, before and after the New Testament was written, that the practice of Slavery, or the SLAVE-TRADE, was universally adopted by the very Nations to whom they brought the glad tidings of salvation, and who, through faith, repentance, and obedience to the maxims and doctrine they preached, were received into the Covenant of reconciliation and grace; and yet it is not less certain from the constant tenour of the Sacred Writings of the New Testament, that desisting from the prosecution of the SLAVE-TRADE, or manumitting those who were in actual bondage, was never declared by any of the Apostles

ties or first Teachers of Christianity to be a necessary term of Salvation or acceptance with God, or an indispensable duty of a follower of Christ.

BUT were the Trade so diametrically opposite to the principles of Christianity, as it is asserted, were it a most unjustifiable usurpation of the sacred rights of justice and humanity, would the Apostles have suffered those sacred rights to be thus invaded and trampled upon with impunity, without so much as signifying to those, whom they were commissioned to teach the Gospel of righteousness and peace, of love and charity, that it was in open contradiction with the principles and precepts of that Gospel?

3. INFINE: this manner of reasoning to prove the moral conformity of the SLAVE-TRADE with the principles of the Christian Dispensation, acquires a degree of irresistible force, when applied to the conduct of our Blessed Saviour in his public character of Founder and Teacher of the New Law; for though he embraced every opportunity of reprobating in the severest terms such irreligious abuses as were practised by the Jews, and of rectifying such false glosses, traditions, and comments, as had been added by them to the Law of Moses; yet he never once condemned, reproved, or even hinted the least disapprobation of the practice of Slavery, so generally adopted in his time: no, not even in his Divine Sermon on the Mount, in which he spoke on set purpose of the most exalted duties of his Religion, entered into a minute and most circumstantial detail of many reciprocal offices and duties he required of his followers, and rectified some abuses, incomparably less criminal than would be that of enslaving our fellow creatures, were this practice so very criminal and unjust as is represented by some modern advocates for African Liberty (c).

4. THE fact is: that since neither the Son of God, being himself God, nor his Disciples commissioned to teach his doctrine, could ever alter the intrinsic nature of *Right* and *Wrong*; once the practice of Slavery, or the SLAVE-TRADE, had been expressly declared by the FATHER essentially just and lawful in the Sacred Writings of the Old Law, which the Son *did not come to destroy, but to fulfil* (d), it was absolutely impossible, that either HE or his Disciples should declare it unlawful and unjust in the Writings of the New, the principles of both the Laws, respecting the intrinsic nature of *Right* and *Wrong, Justice* and *Injustice*, being invariably the same.

IT follows then, that the argument drawn in favour of the SLAVE-Trade from the constant silence of the Inspired Writers of the New Testament respecting the pretended illicitness of that Trade, that is, from their never mentioning any thing against the licitness of it, which, in the circumstances above related, would have been only a negative inference, though of considerable weight in vindication of it, becomes now, from this last very material circumstance, a most powerful positive argument, shewing in the strongest light, that the nature of the SLAVE-TRADE is perfectly consonant to the principles and tenets of the Christian Law.

IX. THOUGH the argument built on the *supposed silence* of the Inspired Writers of the New Testament respecting the licitness of the SLAVE-TRADE, is very amply confuted by the preceding arguments drawn from the *real silence* of the same Sacred Writers respecting the pretended illicitness of it, which are, indeed, abundantly sufficient to establish beyond the power of cavil or reply this last part of my SCRIPTURAL RESEARCHES; yet, lest any one should still persist in maintaining

(d) Matt. c. 5. v. 17.

maintaining the opinion so generally received, that there is nothing *positive* in the Writings of the New Testament, that can be produced in justification of the *SLAVE-TRADE*, I think it expedient to select one or two principal instances out of these Sacred Books, which, I flatter myself, will not only gratify his curiosity, but serve to convince him in the plainest manner, that, however general his opinion may be, it is not so evident as he has been taught to believe.

### *I. EPISTLE to TIMOTHY.*

X. AMONG the several instructions given in this EPISTLE by St. Paul to his beloved Disciple Timothy for the Government of the Church of Ephesus, of which he was Bishop, there are some concerning the general duties of that part of his Flock, who were under the yoke of bondage or Slavery, that seem to claim our particular attention. The instructions, here alluded to, are in the VI<sup>th</sup> Chapter of this EPISTLE, and are the following:—

v. 1. Let as many servants as are under the yoke, count their own Masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God, and his doctrine, be not blasphemed.

2. And they that have believing Masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren: but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.

3. If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness,

4. He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions, and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, &c.

XI. THE Apostle in these words describes two classes of Christian Slaves, or Servants under the yoke of bondage: Slaves subject to unbelievers, and Slaves subject to true believers or Christians; and, according to their respective situations, he specifies the general duties belonging to each class.

1. THE former are exhorted to *count their own Masters, though Infidels, worthy of all honour*: that is, they are exhorted to shew their Masters, both in words and actions, such unfeigned marks of honour, submission, and respect, as they have a right to claim, for *they are worthy of all honour*, from the superiority of their rank and station in life, and the authority they have acquired over them by the possession of their persons. The reason for enforcing such dutiful deportment is very powerful; you are to exhort them, says the Apostle to Timothy, to behave in this becoming manner, *that the name of God, and his doctrine, be not blasphemed*: that is, lest the unbelieving Masters, seeing the contrary deportment in their Christian Slaves, attribute their insolent, disrespectful, and disobedient conduct, to the principles and doctrine of their Religion, and thus bring reproach and infamy upon both.

2. THE latter Class of Christian Slaves, subject to Christian Masters, are earnestly exhorted, not only not to be less respectful and obsequious to the latter for being their brethren in Christ, and joint members with them of the same Communion and Church, as if they were their equals in every respect, but to show, on this very account, in their readiness and zeal to serve them, a superior degree of submission and obedience to their lawful authority; not considering themselves upon a footing of natural equality with those whose Slaves they are, though entitled at the same

time

time to all the promises and spiritual franchises of true Believers.

XII. From the tenour of these Apostolic instructions, confirmed by many other similar declarations to the same effect, frequently occurring in the Writings of the New Testament, I am naturally led to deduce the following consequences in support of the licitnels of the SLAVE-TRADE.

1. It is then evident from the Doctrine of St. Paul, that Christians, however entitled by Baptism to the Spiritual freedom of Children of God, and Heirs of heaven, ought yet, when under the yoke of human bondage or slavery, consider themselves under the strictest obligation of reverencing the authority of their Masters, even of unbelieving Masters, *and counting them worthy of all honour*. But were the SLAVE-TRADE, or the keeping of our fellow-creatures in bondage, unnatural and unjust, it could never be said, that Slaves were under the least obligation in conscience to reverence and obey an unjust, an unnatural authority ; or that their Masters, who, by reducing them to that abject condition, had trampled on the Sacred rights of justice and humanity, were *worthy of all honour*, or, indeed, of any shadow of honour, but, on the contrary, of all dishonour and reproach.

2. It is likewise evident from the Apostle's doctrine, that the primitive Christians were not only not forbidden, but expressly allowed by the principles of our Religion the purchasing of Slaves, and keeping their fellow-creatures, nay, even their fellow-Christians, under the yoke of bondage or Slavery ; and from the circumstance of their Slaves being so particularly cautioned not to consider themselves on the footing of natural equality with their Masters, not to despise them and their authority for being their equals in all spiritual attainments and franchises, *but to show, on this*

this very account, a greater degree of readiness and alacrity to render them due service, their Masters are evidently declared to have had a just and indisputable claim to that service, as their own lawful property.

XIII. NEITHER can it be said, that this doctrine, perhaps, novel to some of my Readers, which Timothy is directed *to teach and to exhort*, was only the private opinion of St. Paul; for he declares to him in express words, that it is *a doctrine according to godliness*, the very doctrine of Christ himself, and not to be contradicted by any one, without incurring the accumulated guilt of pride and folly with a criminal train of attendants: “ If any man, *says he*, teach “ otherwise, and content not to wholesome words, “ even the words of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and to “ the doctrine, which is according to godliness, he is “ proud, knowing nothing, but doting about ques- “ tions, and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, “ strife, railings, evil surmisings, &c.”

XIV. So far then from being true, that there is nothing in the Sacred Writings of the New Testament, that can be produced in vindication of the SLAVE-TRADE, the palpable evidence just produced in justification of that Trade from the authentic words of One of the very principal inspired Authors of those Sacred Writings, must convince every candid inquirer into the merits of the present Controversy, that, if the SLAVE-TRADE, as demonstrated in the two preceding Parts, appears so visibly warranted by the Writings of the Old Testament, the same is not less evidently authorized, but rather more explicitly vindicated from every suspicion of guilt and immorality by the Writings of the New: for, they do not only declare in formal words, that the teaching of the licitnes of the SLAVE-TRADE, exemplified in the practice of the Primitive Christians, is a *Doctrine according to Godliness*, and according to

wholesome words, even the words of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, but they even stigmatize the Teachers of the contrary doctrine with epithets and appellations not of the most pleasing sounds.

*EPISTLE to PHILEMON.*

XV. PHILEMON, to whom St. Paul addresses this affectionate Epistle, was a rich Colossian, and a Christian of distinguished merit. The character given of him in the first part of this Epistle, represents him as one of the most zealous and fervent Christians of his time. His assiduity in promoting the interest of Christianity in quality of *Fellow-labourer* with St. Paul (e), his *love and faith towards the Lord Jesus*, and his generous unbounded charity *towards all the saints*, or his fellow-Christians (f), whom he relieved and comforted on all occasions (g), gained him the confidence, esteem, and affection of the Apostle and of the whole Church at large (h).

XVI. THIS Primitive and exemplary Christian had in his service one ONESIMUS, a Slave, who, as it is very strongly intimated by St. Paul, having defrauded his Master of some part of his property, and knowing the influence the Apostle had over him, eloped from his Master's house, went to Rome, where St. Paul was then in prison, was converted by him, and received into the Communion of the Christian Church (i); and having by his good services and christian conduct, gained the Apostle's favour, he seems to have prevailed on him to write to his Master Philemon in his behalf.

XVII. THE Letter, of which ONESIMUS himself appears to have been the Bearer, is a master-piece of eloquence, and one of the finest Compositions extant in the Epistolary kind. Nothing can be more tender,

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more

(e) Ep. to Phil. v. 1. (f) Ibid. v. 5. (g) Ibid. v. 7.

(h) Ibid. v. 7. (i) Ibid. v. 10.

more pressing, more animated and persuasive: entreaties and authority, praises and recommendations, religious motives and motives of personal gratitude and integrity, are most inimitably well tempered and alloyed together. In short; almost every word of this very concise Epistle contains some argument or reason to effect a reconciliation between Philemon and Onesimus; and to obtain from the Master the re-admission of his fugitive Slave into his house and service.

XVIII. THE following XIV Verses of this elegant Epistle, which seem to have a more immediate connexion than the rest with the subject of our present inquiry, will afford me sufficient matter for such reflections, as will not only confirm the doctrine enforced in this SECTION respecting the moral conformity of the SLAVE-TRADE with the principles of the Christian Dispensation, but prevent me from proceeding any farther in my SCRIPTURAL RESEARCHES on this interesting subject.

THE following is a literal transcript of the Contents of the Apostle's Letter to Philemon from the VIII<sup>th</sup> to the XXII<sup>d</sup> Verse.

8. Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient;

9. Yet, for love's sake, I rather beseech thee, being such a one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ.

10. I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds.

11. Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me;

12. Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is mine own bowels.

13. Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the Gospel.

14. But

14. But without thy mind would I do nothing, that thy benefit should not be, as it were, of necessity, but willingly.

15. For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever:

16. Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, especially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh and in the Lord?

17. If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself.

18. If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee aught, put that on mine account.

19. I Paul have written it with my own hand, I will repay it: albeit I do not say to thee, how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides:

20. Yea, Brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord; refresh my bowels in the Lord.

21. Having confidence in thy obedience, I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.

XIX. THE following obvious remarks, adapted to the subject of our present inquiry respecting the moral licitness of the SLAVE-TRADE, seem naturally to arise from the tenour of this sacred portion of Scripture.

1. The Apostle declares in the first place, that, were he to act in the plenitude of his Apostolic Commission and Authority, without any regard to the dictates of his love and friendship for Philemon, he would not use the style of a suppliant, as he does, but would peremptorily enjoin him to receive his fugitive Slave into his house and service, which he is bound to do in decency and duty: the word *Convenient* in the Original has both these meanings. From which declaration it evidently follows, that the Apostle was so far from thinking, that Philemon had acted wrong or unjustly in keeping Onesimus in bondage, when ~~ye~~ an unbeliever,

liever, that he assures him, on the contrary, he would act in opposition to his duty, or unjustly, in not receiving him again, when baptized, into his house and service.

2. This declaration acquires a superior degree of force from the circumstance he subjoins to his request, as a powerful inducement for Philemon to receive him again into his service. This circumstance, alluding to the name of **ONESIMUS**, which in Greek is the same as **PROFITABLE**, is both beautiful and interesting. The Apostle owns without disguise, that **Onesimus** *in time past* had certainly *been an unprofitable*, or, in Scripture-language, *a bad Servant* (k): but, as he could now assure Philemon, that he was quite reclaimed, and become *profitable* to both, he earnestly solicits his readmission, in order that he may be enabled to make amends for his past negligence and inattention to his service by his future diligence and assiduity.—It was then **Onesimus's** duty to have been *useful and profitable* to his Master **Philemon**, whilst under the yoke of servitude; and it was an act of manifest injustice in him to have been *unprofitable* and of no service. **Philemon** then had a just and undoubted right to the service of **Onesimus**, as his Slave; or else **Onesimus** could never have been taxed by the Apostle with acting the part of an *unprofitable or bad servant*, or with any personal injustice, for neglecting a service, which **Philemon** had no right or title to demand.

3. Again: to convince **Philemon**, how much **Onesimus** was changed for the better since his elopement, and the great reformation that his conversion to Christianity had wrought in his morals and conduct, he tells him, how much he was inclined himself to keep him in his own service; intimating to him in this delicate and gentle

(k) Matt. c. 25. v. 30.

gentle manner, that he could have no objection to receive again into his service a person so well qualified, as Onesimus was then, to be an Apostle's Servant: and he assures him further, that the only reason that has prevented him from indulging his inclination to detain him, has been his not having had his leave and consent for so doing; *without which*, says he, he would never attempt to deprive him of his Slave. From this declaration it appears in the strongest light, how very sacred and inviolable the acquired rights of Masters over their Slaves, even of Christian Masters and Slaves, were held by St. Paul, who would not by any means deprive Philemon of Onesimus, however useful the latter was to him at that time, and whatever ascendancy he had over his Master, without having first obtained his express approbation and consent: he would then, says he, receive Onesimus, as a *benefit* perfectly gratuitous, as a free and voluntary gift made to him by Philemon of so valuable a part of his property.

4. Till he obtains this consent, he sends Onesimus back to his lawful Master, entreating him in the most pressing and affectionate manner, to use him with all possible tenderness and regard: to consider him now as a member of the Communion of the true believers, and consequently not in the character of a common menial Slave, but as his own brother in Christ, though still his property *according to the flesh*, which to him particularly ought to be dearer than ever, as being now consecrated to God.—And lest Philemon should insist on Onesimus making due satisfaction for having defrauded him of his time, or other property, and should, on that account, use him with severity, the Apostle engages to make him full reparation, and becomes himself responsible for the whole: which is a manifest

manifest acknowledgement of Philemon's right, as the lawful Master of Onesimus, to inflict due punishment on his SLAVE.

XX. From these observations, so naturally flowing from the Contents of the Apostle's letter to Philemon, these two necessary consequences seem as naturally to follow.

1. Had St. Paul, who had been instructed in the principles of the Christian Religion, not by men, but immediately by Christ himself (*l*), *whose chosen vessel he was to bear his name before the Gentiles, and Kings, and the Children of Israel* (*m*), been taught by his Divine Master, that the SLAVE-TRADE, or the purchasing of Slaves, or keeping those already purchased in servitude or bondage, was an unnatural, iniquitous pursuit, contrary to the Spirit of his Religion, he would have certainly addressed himself to Philemon in a very different style from that of his present Letter: and, instead of acting the part of a Suppliant, the part of an intercessor and Mediator, as he does, in soliciting of him the re-admission of a fugitive Slave, he would have assumed the style and tone of a Master; would have severely condemned the unjustifiable conduct of Philemon in detaining him in criminal bondage, contrary to the Laws of his holy Religion, would have commended the spirited conduct of Onesimus in shaking off the heavy yoke of servitude, would not have suffered him to return to his unnatural Master Philemon, especially after he had converted him to Christianity, and entitled him by Baptism to the glorious franchises and liberty of the Children of God, and would not have stood on complimentary ceremonies, finding him useful in his actual state of confinement,

ment, to retain him in his ministry, without asking his pretended Master's leave, or without his consent.

THIS, I am confident, would have been the language and conduct of the Apostle, had he been taught by his Divine Master, that the principles and doctrine of the Gospel, he was commissioned to preach, were in direct opposition to the practice of the SLAVE-TRADE, to the practice of purchasing Slaves, or keeping those already purchased in bondage or slavery.

2. But, since the Apostle, conformably to the instructions he had received from his Lord and Master JESUS CHRIST, respecting every part of a Christian's duty, expresses himself in this Epistle, as well as in every other, where he speaks on this much misrepresented subject, in terms and language diametrically opposite to the sentiments just mentioned; we are forced to conclude, that, since Philemon, as well as many other Primitive Christians, cotemporary with the Apostles of Christ and first Teachers of Christianity, kept Slaves, even Christian Slaves, in their service, in the very face of the whole Church, and with the approbation and knowledge of the primitive Apostles and Disciples of Christ, as has been demonstrated from some of the clearest testimonies of the New Testament, the nature of the SLAVE-TRADE, being so visibly authorized by the positive sanction of those Sacred Writings, must be essentially just and lawful in its principles, and perfectly consonant to those of the Christian Law.

XXI. EVIDENT as this conclusion appears from the Scriptural arguments enforced in the course of this SECTION, I cannot close the Subject of these RESEARCHES without taking some notice of what, I apprehend, will be objected against it from the Words of our Blessed Saviour in his divine Sermon on the Mount, which in the VIII<sup>th</sup> Number of this Section I declared with particular

particular stress to contain nothing against the licitness of the SLAVE-TRADE.—The Words, here alluded to, will, I presume, be thus retorted against it.

*All things whatsoever, says our Blessed Saviour, ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets (n):* whatsoever things therefore we would not, that men should do to us, we are not even so to do to them; but no person whatever would certainly wish, that a fellow-creature should reduce him to the condition of a Slave; therefore no person whatever is to reduce a fellow-creature to that condition.

XXII. HERE again I must observe, that no one can justly tax me with any partiality to the Cause I have espoused: I have, I think, worded the argument against it in terms as forcible, as the most zealous advocate for African Liberty, could use. But unanswerable as the same may appear to them, it is but a plausible argument at the best.

IT is an Axiom in Logic, that *An argument that proves too much, proves nothing*: the above is just such a one: for, by the same manner of reasoning, one might equally conclude, contrary to the Law and the Prophets, and the doctrine of the Christian Religion, that not only Slavery, but every other kind of subordination of one man to another, ought not to be suffered to continue in the World.—The argument, if conclusive in the former case, must be equally so in the latter: I enforce it thus:—

*All things whatsoever, says our Blessed Saviour, ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets: whatsoever things therefore we would not that men should do to us, we are not even so to do to them; but every person would naturally*

turally wish not to be controlled by a fellow-creature, not to be under any subjection to him, but to be absolute master of his own actions; no person therefore ought to keep a fellow-creature under any control or subjection whatever.

XXIII. SUCH is the consequence of wresting the natural and obvious meaning of the maxims of Scripture, and applying them to purposes inconsistent with Scripture itself. The GOLDEN MAXIM of our Divine Master, comprehending in two words the whole perfection of a Christian, was certainly intended by him for all stations in life, for of such was his Church to consist to the end of time: from the Throne to the Cottage, in every walk of life, in bondage or at liberty, every Christian is taught and directed To do UNTO OTHERS, AS HE WOULD BE DONE UNTO; and, by a necessary consequence, NOT TO DO UNTO OTHERS, AS HE WOULD NOT BE DONE UNTO: that is, every Christian is commanded to behave to his neighbour, in whatever situation or circumstances in life Providence may have placed them both, just as he would wish his neighbour would behave to him in his situation, were his neighbour's situation and circumstances his own: so that, to apply the MAXIM to a particular Case (even the Case in question), no Christian Master can be said to *do unto others as he would be done unto*, unless he behaves to his Slave with the same tenderness, justice, and humanity, as he would wish his Slave would behave to him, were the Slave his Master, and himself the Slave; and, upon the same principle, no Slave can be said to *do unto others as he would be done unto*, unless he serves his Master with the same fidelity, submission, and respect, which he would expect from his Master, were the latter his Slave, and himself the Master.

XXIV. THE GOLDEN MAXIM then, of DOING UNTO OTHERS, AS WE WOULD BE DONE UNTO, is so far from condemning in the most distant manner the prosecution of the SLAVE-TRADE, that, when applied to the Case of Christian Masters and their Slaves, it serves, on the contrary, to enforce their reciprocal duties in their different spheres of life. Neither could it be otherwise, seeing, that the same Divine Authority, on which the truth of the above MAXIM is founded, has so frequently given his sanction in the Writings of both the Testaments to the licitness of the SLAVE-TRADE.

XXV. I HAVE now, I think, verified in its full extent the Assertion I engaged to prove in the Title-page; that these SCRIPTURAL RESEARCHES on the licitness of the SLAVE-TRADE, would shew the moral conformity of that Trade with the Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion delineated in the Sacred Writings of the WORD of GOD: and as I prefixed to the Whole certain Positions or DATA, on the truth of which the undeniable religious certainty of that moral conformity is entirely founded, so I shall now annex to the whole a few COROLLARIES or Consequences, which, from their necessary dependance on the former DATA, must convince every religious and candid Reader of the necessity of acquiescing in the Scriptural Doctrine enforced in these RESEARCHES.

COROLLARIES.

## C O R O L L A R I E S.

## I.

SINCE the Sacred Writings of the HOLY BIBLE contain the unerring Decisions of the WORD of GOD, the Authority of which in both the Testaments is founded on the essential veracity of God, who is TRUTH itself ; it follows necessarily, that, as there can be no prescription against that Authority, which, in the several scriptural passages quoted in the series of the foregoing RESEARCHES, has positively declared, that the SLAVE-TRADE is intrinsically good and licit, this, by a necessary consequence, must be essentially so in its own nature, however contrary such declaration may be to the received opinion of some men for any length of time.

## II.

SINCE the Supreme Legislator of the World is infinitely just and wise in all his Decisions respecting *Right* and *Wrong*, and is no ways accountable to his Creatures for the reasons of his conduct in the government of the World ; so it must be a degree of presumption highly criminal in any creature to refuse assent to those particular Decisions, by which he has so positively declared the intrinsic licitnes of the SLAVE-TRADE, only because he cannot account for that impartial justice, which characterizes every Decision of God, from those hidden principles of Eternal Justice, incomprehensible to him, which induced the Almighty to establish in the World that subordinate state of absolute subjection of some of his rational Creatures to others.

## III.

SINCE no person can be supposed to acknowledge in fact, that the HOLY SCRIPTURES are the unerring

WORD of God, unless he acquiesces without reserve in every Scriptural Decision, however incomprehensible the reasons and motives of those Decisions may be to him, and that on no other account, but because he believes them to be the Declarations of God, who, being TRUTH itself, can neither err himself, nor lead any one into error; it follows necessarily, that whoever does not acquiesce in those Scriptural Decisions, quoted in the series of the foregoing RESEARCHES, declaring in formal Words the licitness of the SLAVE-TRADE, cannot be said to acknowledge in fact, that the HOLY SCRIPTURES are the unerring WORD of GOD.

## IV.

SINCE not only one, but several Decisions of the Written WORD of God, as appears from the foregoing RESEARCHES, give a positive sanction to the licitness of the SLAVE-TRADE; it is not from the principle of private or National advantages attending the prosecution of it, which can never affect the intrinsic nature of any human pursuit, that any one is to believe, that the SLAVE-TRADE is intrinsically just and lawful in the strictest sense of the word, but from the incontrovertible veracity of the Written WORD of God, whose Decisions they are, and who is essentially incompatible with the least degree of injustice.

## V.

SINCE no abuses or malepractices whatever, committed in the prosecution of a lawful pursuit, can ever alter the intrinsic licitness of it; there being no other arguments, that can be produced against the SLAVE-TRADE, but such as are built on the strength of such abuses as are said to be perpetrated in the prosecution of it; no arguments whatever will ever evince any intrinsic moral turpitude in its Nature, so explicitly declared

clared just and lawful in the Sacred Writings of the WORD of GOD, notwithstanding the many abuses to which it was formerly subject, and were formerly practised, as well as now.

## VI.

SINCE no abuses or malepractices whatever, though of the greatest magnitude, committed in former times in the prosecution of the SLAVE-TRADE (*a*), ever induced the Almighty to prohibit or abolish that Trade, but only to check by wholesome and coercive Laws the violence of unnatural Masters (*b*), and to punish the transgressors with the greatest severity (*c*); there appears no reason whatever, why the abuses and malepractices said to be perpetrated in our days in the prosecution of the same Trade, evidently subject to the control of the Legislature, should be deemed a powerful inducement to proceed to the abolition of it.

(*a*) Gen. 35. 22. Exod. 21. 8, 16, 20, 26, 27. Levit. 19. 20.  
 Jerem. 34. v. 8—18. (*b*) Exod. 21. v. 7, 12, 16, 20, 21, 26, 27.  
 Levit. 19. v. 20, 21, 22. Ibid. 25. v. 39—43.  
 (*c*) Jeremiah, c. 34. v. 17—22.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

IT was the Author's design, when he first engaged to vindicate the licitness of the SLAVE-TRADE from the Sacred Writings of the WORD of GOD, to have concluded his RESEARCHES with another SECTION, containing some Scriptural Directions for the proper treatment of Slaves, together with some Exemplary Punishments and Comminations registered in the same divine Repository of religious Knowledge, for deterring the Conductors and Proprietors of Slaves from ever infringing by any acts of violence and oppression the sacred bounds of that Authority, with which they are entrusted for a time, and which they can never trespass with absolute impunity: but the shortness of the time, which his other avocations have allowed him for completing the Scriptural Vindication contained in the three Sections of his RESEARCHES, having made it absolutely impossible for him to execute the whole of his Original Design, he is obliged to offer it to the Public in its present state.